

See THE *Warty*;
Reasoning Apostate:

OR MODERN

LATITUDE-MAN

CONSIDER'D,

As he opposeth the Authority

OF THE

KING and CHURCH.

OCCASION'D

By several late TREATISES.

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Clare-Hall in Cambridg.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

W*Hen I saw the Church
and Religion defended only by Reason,
I lookt on its condition as De-
plorable as a forlorn Hope,
For rational Assertors of Re-
ligion, who scorn the Aux-
iliaries of the Church, though
they appear as stout Souldi-
ers, yet they are ill Disci-
plin'd, and as Goliah, set up
with a natural Fortitude and*

* 2

prodi-

THE EPISTLE.

*prodigious Bulk, more fit for
a Spectacle than a Fight,
more fit for Inquisitive Spec-
ulation than Practical Re-
ligion; And that which ren-
ders Reason thus incapable
of putting an end to Di-
sputes, is this, because there
are some Doctrines in obscure
places of Scripture, which
are like Garrisons on such a
Rock which bids Defiance
to Reason to Storm it, or
Art to surprize it. Arca-
na (which God alone by the
Mediation of the Church)
will*

THE EPISTLE.

will most fully reveal and deliver to Man.

It is well known that some obscure Texts of Scripture, as Christ the Author, appear as Incognito till the Church makes the discovery.

*I am not bound to believe that our Saviour gave such Commands to his Apostles, as a Philosopher did to his Scholars, who wrapt up his knowledg in obscure Methods, as a dark Shop to commend the Wares. Yet 'tis certain that some places
of*

THE EPISTLE.

of Scripture are so hard to be understood, that they deserve to be call'd Oracles for their Obscurity as much as Truth. Now who shall make discovery of it but those to whom these Oracles of God are committed, and they are the Church.

I need not trouble the Reader with the Contents of these Papers, but shall only say, that I have endeavor'd to give Religion as well as Reason its due, to rob Man of the one is unnatural Injustice, to steal

THE EPISTLE.

*steal from the other the worst
Sacriledg. This made me
endeavour to assert the Autho-
rity of the Church, especially
in this Age in which it seems
to be exposed to contempt,
and some factious persons look-
ing on it as in a helpless and
weak condition, not able to de-
fend it self, much less to protect
or assist others, turn the Divine
Command into a Scoff and
Jeer, whilst in Derision they
say, Go tell the Church.*

Names of some Treatises more
Obscurely mentioned in the
following Considerations.

N. E. *The natural Fanatick.*

Milton, of *Civil Power in Ecclesi-
astical Causes,* page 24.

*The Judgment of Non-conformists
of the interest of Reason in mat-
ters of Religion,* p. 26.

The Advocate of Conscience=Liberty,
p. 42.

The Author of Smyrk, p. 43.

*A Jesuit against one of the Sorbo-
nists,* p. 74.

The Advocate for Conscience=Liberty,
p. 92.

Consi-



Consideration I.

Of the Defence of the Church of England by some Orthodox-men, in a Method or Style which seems to some too familiar, biting, and severe.



Though the admirable Defence of the Church of England by some of the Laity (which Name may be fastened on Nobles, as well as Peasants, though a late Author hath undertaken by

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Cho-

Chorah's Model to assert each person a Priest ; (as it was objected to *Luther* by a great *French* Historian) deserves as much Commendation as that ancient practice of drawing the Sword when Christians stood on their guard whilst they made confession of their Faith ; and that without imputation of Ambition or Vain glory , have supported the tottering Ark by their rational discourses , and seem as men from *Macedonia* at *St. Paul's* Summons, to assist the Church ; yet some of these endeavouring to take off from the estimation of the authority of the Church, they seem to me to be (as *Cassianus* says of the secular

cular order of Men in the Ro-
man Church, *Sacerdoturientes*, a
 new kind of *Gray Fryers* in the
 reform'd Religion. Neither do
 other men seem less fatal to the
 Church who are as *Mendicants*,
 at least in their language, endea-
 vouring to win their designs by
 a cringing Supplication, *I be-
 seech you my Fathers*, which they
 could not obtain by Arguments.
 These men professing a *plainness*
 of *Speech* and Integrity, seem
 as much suspicious as the *Gibeo-
 nites* to make Leagues with *clow-
 ted Shoos* whilst Poverty pleads
 their cause. Neither are those
 altogether excusable who dis-
 pute against their Adversaries
 in a rational way without pres-
 sing

sing the Authority of some an-
 cient Fathers ; seeing it is possi-
 ble to shew, that the most valu-
 able Arguments which are made
 use of as a Battery against *Atheists*
 are not the meer products of their
 own inventions, but of others
 whose names are conceal'd by
 them ; I know not for what reason
 except this is it, that they thought
 Authority would prejudice the
 humourfome Age, and that
 Books would be better esteem'd
 as Anonymous, or a *New Cabala*
 to the reformed Religion, or be-
 cause it seems policy in Church
 as well as State (*Arcana Eccle-*
sia as much as *Imperii*) to con-
 ceal the Authors from whom
 they had their Intelligence or
 Imfor-

Information. This Method makes men start at the citations of ancient Fathers, as the Disciples did at Christ's person walking on the Waters, supposing them as evil Spirits to seduce them.

But I pass from this to the other branch of this Consideration, which makes me astonished to think how some Orthodox persons have been cavilled with for defending the Church in too severe and bitter Methods, and a charge laid on *Prelates*, as if they design'd the defence of the Church as *St. Mallos* is guarded with *snarling Currs*, and those who assert their Authority esteem'd as *Cock Hectors*, who win Battels more by

Garlick than Strength , whilst
a stinking Breath defeats the
Combatant.

These need not my Vindication (they have done it themselves) but suppose some Excursions not so commen'able ; let it be consider'd that it is as impossible for a man to modelize his language so when he disputes with an Adversary as shall not offend him, as it is for a man who fights a Duel, to keep up to all those rules which he prescrib'd to himself before the engagement. *Polemical Arguments are like a Bolt or Shot which contracts Heat by flying. Laws in such cases cannot be observed*

serv'd, and the Disputant cannot be so accurate in his Language as *Hortensius* in his Gown, as well as Oration, (such a one deserves to be call'd *Smyrk* or the *Divine in mode*) to be in a set accurate form without a wrinkle. He who disputes with *Suarez*, must make use of his language. Metaphysical Notions which are necessarily mix'd in Divine Dispute, cannot be so plainly controverted by Scripture Phrase, which in some cases cannot confute the Adversary any otherwise than the *Idiot* did *Bellarmino*, by giving him the *Lye*. To say all Adversaries must be disputed with by their own weapons; *St. Paul* warrants it,

who draws an Argument from a Poet , when he might have cited the sense out of the first Chapter of *Genesis*.

But this perhaps may not seem so pertinent to the present case, for the age is sufficiently weary'd out with Distinctions and terms of Art , which like *dry Bones* knit together, only make a *Skeleton* , not a man , but that which is censur'd is the launching out the licentious phrase of Stage.

'Tis true, this is unworthy of Divine Discourse, and the Priest ought to scorn variety of humour or phancy in his language , as much as the *Spaniard* doth a fantastick Dress; his language ought
to

to strike so much aw according to the Character given of *Job*, *Though I smil'd* (says he) *they believ'd me not* ; though any thing drop which seems not of equal moment with the rest of the Discourse, the weight of the one overpoyseth the levity of the other.

This may be well suppos'd ; for *Gravity* and *Levity* in discourse seem to be as natural and as necessary as they are in Bodys : And as no bodys are so dense or thick, but some subtile matter lurks in the Pores ; so no discourse so close but it may have its airy matter intermix'd and in imbodi'd with it. The grave Writings of the Ancient Fathers are

as

as a Witness of this. I could instance in some, if it were necessary.

To say all Arguments like, Arrows, to which a Plume is no less necessary than a ponderous Metal, whilst one gives it flight, the other makes the wound. Such necessary Levity at least may be pardonable, but Scurrility is a vice in *Morals*, much more in *Religion*. However a sharp and severe way of Arguing must not be omitted, for it is as necessary to the Priest as an *Acid humour* to the Stomach, without which the meat would not be digested: There is no new Method, *Nazianzens* λόγος σωτηρι-
κός is an evidence of it, and primitive

mitive Fathers sharply check the Gentiles for their folly. Yet all this was without Scurrilous Language, altogether unlike to *Luther's* railing Method, which occasion'd some of the *Roman Church* to call him and his Disciples *Mad Men*. However he deserv'd well of the Church (I presume none will deny) and it may be retorted on those who object it , that some of theirs have fixed odious Names on Protestants , *Dogs* , *Infidels* , *Magicians* , nay worse, as a great Doctor signs their Banishments, in these words, *Ut magos publica Authoritate arcemus , civitate pellimus, &c.*

I might cite others to this purpose

pose no less Black-mouth'd, but I forbear to do that, and shall only suggest this to the Readers thoughts. As the Church of *England*, though the first Reformers (if it can be reasonably imagin'd that its *first Reformers* , gave any credit to the Objections of some of the *Roman Church*) were sensible that the Reformation was begun as in a storm of passion and irreverent language , yet disowns not the consequence of it, seeing it as a Tempest cast them on a happy shore, now shall not all sincere Christians do as the first *Reformers* did ; who when they saw Religion , well defended , though in an unbecoming

seeming and boysterous way (For which there is no reason of complaint in this case) would not have Religion suffer for it, for that would have argued as much folly as if a Prince should disown a Victory because gotten by rash and imprudent means, or like casting *Joseph* into the Pit only out of spight to his *Coat*, if Religion suffer, because not *pleasingly worded*. I speak not this as an Abettor of *Lucians* scoffs, or a *Rabshekah's* railing, but only to shew how prudence makes use of them. To conclude with a late observation of some Anatomists, who say there is not known a certain use of the *Splene*, and that some creatures

creatures may live without it.
I determine nothing in this case,
but only say I am confident there
is no use of a Petulant Splene in
Religious Debates.

Confi-

Confideration II.

Whether belief, which relies and depends on the Authority of the Catholick Church, and as it is encouraged by the Civil Magistrate, may properly be said to be forc't, and to proceed from an unwarrantable usurpation of the right of natural reason.

THe Church hath not been so effectually undermined by any Method as by representing its Authority under the odious names of Tyranny, and calling all obligation to belief unwarrantable Impositions or force.
Where.

Wherefore it is necessary to examine what is meant by force in its several acceptations, and then assert the Negative of the Question.

Sometimes it is taken philosophically ; for that *Power* which rests a *being* beyond its natural inclination or tendency, according to this account of it : the determination of the *Will* must be accounted *violent* so far as it is concerned in Religion , and *Grace* it self is not able to escape the imputation of force : for grace may as well be said to be an *enforcing* influence on mans nature in his corrupted state, as that power which according to philosophy diverts the natural course

course of the Elements in bodies, and imprisons them in one mixture, otherwise they would retreat to their own first home. The fire and volatile parts would be always moving towards heaven, and the sluggish parts of earth fettered to their center. This is demonstrated in another Treatise *N. F. viz.* that mens thoughts are with as much difficulty composed to a settled and true notion of God and the Soul, as the Elements are commanded to comply in the composition of natural Bodies ; Therefore I shall wave this , and consider it in another sense, as it is more directly and boldly complain'd of, and that is

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it which relates to the authority of the Church and interest of the Magistrate in matters of Religion, which is look'd upon by some as a Battery to destroy all Religion.

This is the Force generally exclaim'd against by the Libertine, which is an unreasonable and an unjust imputation; for if the constant and universal Doctrine of the Church, which hath an obliging influence on Religious minds, must be call'd force, our Reformation and Separation from the Church of Rome, must be esteem'd violent, and consequently illegal. For I cannot apprehend that Separation
was

was justifiable on any better terms; but that the Doctrine of the Reform'd Church is agreeable to the Scriptures, with the consent and evidence of Councils and Fathers. Besides, this not only condemns holy Councils and Fathers, being usurpers of Christian Liberty by imposing matters of Faith, but makes the whole Church lyable to Error, which was never yet asserted by any sober mind. For though it may be granted that Councils and Fathers, each have been lyable to some errors, yet when there is a consent of *all*, it is an infallible argument of Truth, *vid. N. F.* The Bishop of Rome is so sensible of

this, that his Assertors know not how to invest him with Infallibility till they have intitled him to be the *Virtual Church*.

Having considered Force as it relates to the Church, in the next place I cannot but take notice of that, as it concerns the Magistrate or Civil Power. This is the Force which the Libertine most complains of, for that of the Church in its dreadful Censures, is lookt on but as *Κωφὸν Βέλος ἀνδρὸς ἀνέλκιδος*, like a Weapon which hurts not, or Thunder discharg'd without a Bolt. To evade this power they alledg the plantation of the Gospel, not by force of the Magistrate, but by winning persuasion,

suaſion , and to make this appear, cite Chriſt's words (*John 18. v. 36.*) *If my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Ser=*
vants fight. This doth not conclude againſt the authority of Kings in Eccleſiaſtical Caſes, for the deſign of that in this place, was to take off the opinion which the *Jews* had of his coming, that his Kingdom was not Spiritual , but Temporal. This Interpretation is given by *St. Auguſtin.* *Audite ergo Judæi & gentes : audi circumciſio : Audi præputium : audite omnia regna ter=*
rena : non impedio dominationem ve=
ſtram in hoc mundo , regnum meum
non eſt de hoc mundo Auguſt. in
loc.

To this purpose are many Deductions from places of Scripture, which I shall not largely consider by shewing how distorted by Faction beyond the intent of them, which I shall only name, and briefly discover the crookedness of the perverse Interpretations; amongst which none seems to be prest more than that. *Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind, Rom. 14. 5.* In this place the design of the Apostle is not to deliver up each man to his own private Interpretation or extravagant Phancy, as to command an attention to that which was deliver'd by him and the rest of the Apostles, which is the greatest Authority.

For

For to suppose each man to rely on his own intrepertation, is to imagine him to contradict that which he advises in another place, *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorifie God, Rom. 15.6.* For it seems to me to be a Paradox not intelligible, that men may be said to be at *Unity*, with as many different opinions of Christ (which may extend to Fundamentals) as there are Persons. So long as their Faith is terminated in Christ, as *Aliquo tertio* in which they agree. By the same reason they may conclude that there is a Unity of opinion in *Philisophy* concerning all Creatures, whether Animate or in Inanimate, because all agree in this general notion of

Substance or *Animality* , and that it is sufficient to know them in Gross , without more distinct knowledg of them. So that *Metaphysicks* and natural *Philosophy* would be esteem'd as useless in Reason , as some Creeds or Decrees of Councils in Religion. But I pass further , I cannot omit an Objection of a great Agent , for *Libertinism* suggested to the Parliament , in^d 59. shewing the impossibility of the powers interposing in Matters of Religion in some cases ; for (*says he*) the Magistrate must be obey'd for Conscience sake ; how therefore can a man be oblig'd to obey him, when some
duty

duty is commanded which his Conscience contradicts. To this 'tis enough to say, that the fallacy lyes in the word *Conscience*, which in that place must not signifie each man's *persuasion* or *apprehension* of the Duty, for if it were so, some men would not be obliged to obey their Prince, and their fancies exempt them from subjection.

Thus far I have endeavour'd to assert the right of Princes in matters Ecclesiastical, but I shall not undertake to define particularly in what their power consists, or bound it by limits; 'Tis enough to my design, if I can but stop the mouths of a factious Multitude by breaking
and

and diverting the force of their Current, by shewing that these places of Scripture conclude nothing against Princes power, to be exercised in suppressing *Schism* and *Heresie*. Neither shall I be so Dogmatically bold as some late *Smyctimnians*, who, as Magisterially as others, out of a consistory, declare their opinion of the power of the *Supream Magistrate* (as if the title of our King had been distasted by them, because *once* deriv'd from *Rome*, Proclaims him only *Churchwarden* of the Church ; Neither shall I wildly follow their Metaphor, nor criticise the Name with which Princes are called by them, for then

I must consider the Church as it was once represented by the *Ark*, so by a *Chest* with three *Keys*, the King to have one, the Clergy another, the People or *Elders* another: Each have their particular Suffrages; so when all agreed it was to be opened; which if it were so, it is to be fear'd it would be always shut. Neither shall I take notice of another, who ordains the *Laity Clergy*, and the King himself according to him must be a *Clergy Man*, else he can have no right or power in the Church, But I cease to go further in this extravagant Tract, and shall rather propose these Considerations,

Seeing

Seeing it is certain, or at present may be suppos'd that a Council and determination of the whole Church, is the most expedite means of ending Controversies. Is it not reasonable that the Magistrate should press the use of them. Add to this that Councils are call'd by Princes power (as is confessed by all true Protestants) now is it not reasonable that the Decrees of Councils in order to be put in practice, should be as much the Princes care, as the Council was when it was call'd to Ordain them. This consider'd, will make the Christian not to esteem this Method of searching Truth, as a piece of forc'd Servitude,

virtude, for it is no more force to Reason, than Children suffer when they are sent to School. Let not any think themselves injur'd by this Instance, as *Pedantick* for the Doctrine of the Gospel, as well as the Law, may be styl'd a *Pedagogy* in that sense.

But here I may expect a check from a late and hot Assertor of Libertinism, who blames *Constantine*, at least pities him, as if he had an oversight for using this means to settle the Church, because it occasion'd several bloody Persecutions. This is a weak Battery against the Church, and only deserves to be confuted by the Poet.

Exitus

Exitus acta probat ; careat succes-
sibus opto,
Quisquis ab eventu facta notanda
putat.

Success is a very bad test of the prudence us'd in the means, for the one is not to be measur'd by the other, especially by men who are not able to pass Judgment on the success, which is more intelligible and palpable always, than the means. Thus the Author is mistaken, for the success of that Council cannot be said to be bad because Divine Providence made use of those Persecutions for the more undoubted settling of Faith
 seal'd

seal'd with so many Martyrs blood. Let this also be consider'd, that the same would prevail against the Gospel it self, as well as Councils, and Christ himself blam'd by this Observer as much as *Constantine*, because his coming occasion'd strife, as he says, *Mat. 10. 34. I came not to send Peace, but a Sword*, as condemn other pious means.

Another way of asserting Libertinism, is by invalidating the examples of good Kings. *Josiah, Aza, &c.* who had more conference with God, and so their Law more obligatory to the People; but succeeding Kings have no such warrant to do the same. This

This Objection seems valuable, but hath no strength, for if the want of an immediate consultation with God, destroys Authority, or at least weakens it, what will become of other Kings under the Law, who had not such a priviledg intimately to converse with God, or at least in so high a degree. To say all, It may as well be concluded that the Pastors of the Church are not oblig'd to follow the practice of the Apostles, in all actions (some of which Miraculous, others suited to the exigency of the time, the one of which cannot, the other may not be imitated) because none in these days can pretend

tend to the like Inspiration, as deny that Princes may not follow the examples of good Kings under the Law, because later Kings cannot be so much Secretaries of the Almighty, as they were in that *Oeconomy*. Thus they have endeavour'd to invalidate the examples of the *Jewish* Kings, persuading them that the constitution of the *Mosaical Law* and the practice of *Moses* and the *Sanedrim*, or the practice of *David* and *Solomon*, to oblige no more to Imitation, than the lives of *Numa*, *Lycurgus*, or other Lawgivers in *Plutarch*, or the constitution of Heathenish Priests by the *Roman Senate*. This is true, if it is understood

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of

of those Rites and Laws which were purely *Judaical*, but otherwise in those which were not only *Typical*.

It is further urg'd, as the first and second *Oeconomy* differ in many things, and so do the Governors in the several *Dispensations*; for (says he) all the *Jewish Religion* was in *External Rights*, *Civil* and *Religious Acts* so interwoven, that it was not easie to say whether the Church were more like a *Commonwealth*, or the *Commonwealth* a Church. Then concludes that the *Magistrates* business was only to compel outward actions, but the *Christian Magistrate* hath no such task,
Chri-

Christianity consisting in inward acts of the mind. This terrifying Objection may find a check from this consideration, viz. That it is false when it says that all the influence good Kings had on the People, was only to promote outward acts, for that was not only conversant about the Ceremonial, but Instrumental in promoting the *Moral Law*, which certainly respects the *powers* of the *Mind* as much, if not more, than the *outward Act*. Besides in the ceremonial Acts of Law, and offering of Sacrifice, there was imply'd an Act of Faith, as well in other persons as *Abraham*; otherwise their Altars would have been no better

than Shambles, and their Priests than Slaughtermen. Hence it appears that Kings pressing the outward act, might be said to be instrumental in promoting Faith or inward Piety, in which sense it may be said good Kings, as of *Josiah*, *They made the People to serve the Lord their God*, 2 Chron. 34. 33. But I must meet with an Objection which may be urged thus, granting that there was acts of Faith requir'd in acts of Sacrifice; yet those being inward acts of the mind, Kings could not command or compel them.

'Tis true, no earthly King can lay claim to such *Spiritual dominion*: However Christianity being not such an *invisible Religion*,

ligion, but that it exerts it self in several visible acts, as confession of Faith, Communion, &c. which certainly will challenge the Magistrates care in case his aid is wanted; neither will this appear as impertinent to his Office so long as he hath reason to suspect that those whom the Church cannot reduce by her Methods, cannot be as good Subjects as others, when they are declar'd not to be so good Christians.

Schism and *Heresie*, though they do not by necessary consequence imply *Rebellion* and *Schism* and *Rebellion* not always terms convertible, yet they are such as a Prince may suspect, and seem as Vapors under the

Earth, which do not always cause Earth-Quakes, but when they are confin'd to a natural Prison, and cannot break forth, for as the one doth not always put the Earth in such Convulsions, yet excite fear, so the other may have such influence on a Princes mind, which though it cannot shake him (for that supposes weakness) yet may create a prudential Caution.

Consideration III.

Of the authority of Reason, as it stands in competition with the Church, and of Schism and Heresie according to the new account of it, and whether reformation or separation from Communion of the Church, can be as sufficiently

ficiently and legally justifi'd without an appeal to the constant Doctrine of the Catholick Church, as with it.

TAKING it for granted, that Reason is not the last Object Faith and its principles, the *Elements into which it is resolv'd*, as the Reasoner phrases it, it being not able to make a *distinct discovery* of the nature of God, and unfit Judg of rules of his Worship. I refer the Reader to another Discourse, *N. F.* It therefore at present seems only necessary that I assert Ecclesiastical Authority with its due right, above private Judgment of single persons, who so far become the Profelytes of humane Reason in that sense, which a late Author

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asserted it, as they appeal to nothing but the evidence of their own Reason conducted by its own natural Method; only having the information by reading the Scriptures; and fortifying their Opinions with mere natural Arguments (without any respect to the consent or authority of the Church. Many such *Profelytes* have appear'd in this late Age, and cloakt their *Foxish principles* with *Sheeps* clothing of *Piety* and *Tenderness*; yet still seem to have a reverence for the Church and its Authority, as appears in late Pamphlets, which nearly lookt into, is but as an *Ecclesiastical Compliment* (if it is not a *Solæcism* to say so) for rational
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Authority is not Authority properly call'd , for whilst men cause other mens Opinions to be tryed by the tests of their own judgments, they cancel the authority of other men, and make their own as an *αὐτὸς ἔφη.*

This consideration minds men of a Stratagem or Plot to subvert the authority of the Church, and establishing their own, which is not by any way more plausible done to an unwary Multitude than by partial citations of Authors, without considering the Coherence, Circumstance, or Scope of the Author, which they cite. If I design'd to be large in this discourse, I might shew how some undermine the authority of
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the Church, by sinister and malicious application of *Ecclesiastical Story*, as the Author of a late Pamphlet by the success of *Constantine*, would prejudice all Princes against the authority of Councils, and a partial citation of *Gregory Nazianzen* (afterward to be consider'd) but I shall not spend time in canvassing that Story and its application, nor shew the weakness of Reason in its several particulars, only shall take a prospect of Religion abus'd by some late partial Citations by which the Church is threatned, Holy Fathers made to speak contrary to their scope, and Religion expos'd to each cavilling Adversary.

Thus

Thus *Jerome* hath been represented by some, an enemy to *Episcopacy*, as asserted by the Church of *England*. Thus the Church of *England*, whilst some of the *Roman* Church urgeth it with Citations out of the Fathers, which speak the danger of separation from the *Catholick* Church, they apply it to their own, as if to be *Roman* and *Catholick* were all one. Thus a late Author would persuade the Unwary, that the most *Puritan* Protestants, Mr. *Perkins*, and many others, do agree with Papists in several points controverted, which they were as far from, as we can imagine they thought the *Romish* Religion distant from the

the true. The Fathers themselves are cited against themselves, which minds me of some opposers of the authority of the Church, who make them as a Patronage to their factious Presumptions. Thus *Lactantius* is cited, the words are these, *Lib: de Orig. Error. Cap. 8.* having in the former Chapter remov'd the superstitious Rites and custome of some ancient Fathers who instituted them in *Paganism*; he inferst this, *Quare oportet in eâ re maxime, in qua vitæ ratio versatur sibi quemque confidere, suoque iudicio ac propriis sensibus niti, ad investigandam & perpendendam veritatem, quam credentem alienis erroribus, decipi, tanquam ipsum rationis*

nis

nis expertem. Now how injuriously this is affixed as a Preface, to authorize a factious Discourse (as it often is) against the authority of the Church, may appear from the scope and design of the Holy Father in that Chapter, *viz.* to oppose Heathenish Traditions, Dreams and Southsayings, which began before Christianity had footing in the word. But let it be applyed in opposition to the *defintions* and *impositions* of the Church, all that can be concluded from the Words in this, he condemns those who in a stupid observation of the Traditions of their Fathers *More pecudum ducuntur*, as he phrases it, an unreasonable *implicit Faith*, which the
Church

Church of *England* doth not commend to her Sons, but rather opposes its Assertors. To say all, this Holy Author, though an acute Disputant, and of a peircing wit, yet is so far from disdaining Authority, that none more frequent than he in Citations of Heathen Authors, of Poets themselves, to prove the weightiest matters of Religion when he disputed with *Infidels*, as he was, necessitated to do, as he says, *Lib. de falsa Relig. Cap. 5. Sed omittamus sanè testimonia prophetarum, ne minus idonea probatio videatur esse ab his quibus omnino non creditur.* He though a Father of the Church himself, *lib. de justitia c. 4.* cites *St. Cyprian*, arguing

against *Demetrius* by Reason, only because he was not capable of being confuted by any other Method, as appears by the account given in the same Chapter, *Nam cum ageret contra hominem veritatis ignarum, dilatis paulisper divinis lectionibus, formare hunc a principio tanquam rudem debuit.* This gives me occasion of considering what esteem Reason was in matters of Religion, being esteem'd only fit to dispose *Infidels* for Belief, and to instruct *Novices*; but in this Age it is so exalted, that it is thought worthy of the highest place of Judicature, to judge of all Controversies, in so much that the *Smyctimnian* Divines, in their late Papers, declare it to be as
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the *Eye* and *Religion*, as the *Light*, or the *Object*. *Sic res ingeniosa est esse Christianum*, in another sense than formerly, and that which the Author of *Smyrk* says of *Wit*, in a *Jeer*, may be retorted on them, for whilst they make *Reason* an intrepeter of *Scripture*, we may ask them too, if their *reason* is an extraordinary gift of the *Holy Ghost*.

To conclude this part of the Consideration, that those who interpret *Scripture* thus, may not boast themselves *Lactantius* his Disciples, but rather *Profelytes* of the authority of *Humane Reason*, and by this method of making their *Reason* the only *Standard* to measure *Controversies*, seem to appropriate the *Preface* us'd in
General

General Councils (at least one)
 and corrupting, *Visum est nobis*
 & *Spiritui Sancto* by changing
 the terms to every particular per-
 son who is adjusted with equal
 authority, to say *Visum est mihi*
 & *Spiritui Sancto*, which boldness
 exceeds Poetical License, which
 seeing extraordinary acts of Pro-
 vidence, attributed it to the Gods
 whilst they said *Sic visum est su-
 peris.*

This being premis'd, I pass
 to the other part of this consider-
 ation, viz. of Schism and Heresie ac-
 cording to the new account of it, and
 how Reformation is not so justifi-
 able without Appeals to the con-
 stant Doctrine of the Church.

E This

This Assertion must expect to find as furious a return as Water doth when cast on hot Iron. Whilst I affirm that *Schism* and *Heresie* are two of the greatest evils of the Church, and affirm (as I think I safely may) that some have abus'd Religion almost as much by their extenuation of these horrid sins, giving a soft account of them suitable to the humour of the Libertine, as the *Schismatick* and *Heretick* by practice: for such Theory makes way for practice whilst they teach men that *Schism* and *Heresie* are only terms of Art which the Church hath us'd to impose on the Christian Schollars what Doctrine it pleases, and that 'tis the
the

the terrors of the two Greek words (which have not so dreadful a signification as they say) affrights the poor Christian like *thundring and lightning* to run to his Litany to *pray for deliverance*. This slight of subtile men will miss its aim if it is consider'd that the Church is not only as a *Lexicon* or *Dictionary*, to tell the *English* of *αἰρεσις* and *ἁίσμα* but hath power to inflict its Censures when unjustifiable separations are attempted. This unity of the Church is as much to be endeavour'd by the Pastors of it as the *being* of the Church is, and that is so necessary, that I may say of the Catholick Church in matters of Belief, *unum & verum*
E 2 *sunt*

sunt idem, Unity and Truth are undistinguished.

Now as it is certain that without the Catholick Church there is no Salvation (for it is more than a *Parenthesis* in our Creed) so is the Unity necessary in order to it. Wherefore all Churches who at any time endeavour'd a *regular Reformation*, made Appeals to some beside their own private interpretation of Holy Scripture, which might be esteem'd unreasonable. For if it may be imagin'd that each man may make interpretation of the Scriptures; it is very difficult, if not impossible for men (especially those who will have communion with none but those of whom they are assur'd

assur'd are of the same opinion with them in all things) to maintain so perfect charity with a single person, much less with the whole Church. For suppose two different interpretations of some part of Holy Scripture, *viz.* *This is my Body*, and one takes the Body of Christ in the Eucharist to be only *figuratively*, and the other *corporally*, and both agree in this, that the *Consecrated Bread* is rightly call'd the *Body of Christ*, and the worthy Communicants receive it. Thus supposing that these words appear in different senses to different persons, how shall one convince the other that he is of the same Faith with him, if he do not express it in the *same*

words and manner of interpretation,
 (which the Humane Reasoner ac-
 cording to his account of faith
 esteems not necessary) except
 he could creep into his Soul to
 see the thought and the intimate
 motions of the mind, without
 which he will not conclude any
 man can be declar'd a *Heretick*.
 This is an unreasonable and im-
 possible way of discouraging er-
 rors in Religion, which will take
 away all power from the Church
 except it can *keep Court* in each
 mans mind, and see each mo-
 tion of it. Such private inter-
 pretations are like *Visions* or *Ap-*
paritions which appear to some
 persons only when they are *alone*.
 Now as no man is oblig'd to be-
 lieve

lieve the History of such *Apparitions* no further than the Authority of the persons obliges them to it (I speak not of Holy Visions to the Prophets) so no man will think himself bound to believe any private interpretation of a single person, any further than he is possess'd with the authority of the person, except he could enter into his phancy, and borrow the whole Scene as it was represented to the *Visor* or *Seer*, which is impossible. Therefore it is necessary that there be an *open profession* of faith by *plain* and *pertinent* words, which are as *Ligaments* to knit together persons in *outward Communion*. This minds me of the charge given by Saint

Paul to Timothy (2 Tim. i. v. 13.) of taking care of the form of sound words, Whilst he gives his character of them, that they were sound, he omits not the form of words, which in some cases may so alter the sense, for it seems as necessary to Religion to distinguish the true Religion from the false, as the Philosophers form of distinguishing one being from another. An Instance in the word so oft repeated in late Pamphlets, is a great evidence of it for when by a Holy Father without superstition or Adoration of words (which Objection some have made against the name *Jesus* it self, whilst, commended to be bow'd at when
nam'd)

nam'd) which was preserv'd for the alteration of *quæritur*, would destroy the Creed, at least change its sense, the pulling out of an *Iota* being as dangerous as removing a Pin, from a curious piece of Mechanical Art.

This consider'd in its consequences, will further appear more reasonable for the idle conjecture of the Humane Reasoner (though dress'd in a *Theological* habit) is as much to be suspected as *Jesuits* Oaths, prompting men to think that equivocation in *belief*, as well as *oaths*, is to be tolerated, whilst it is concluded that an open profession of the most obscure Texts of Scripture is sufficient, making
each

each Man's phancy a Comment on the Text, and the rule of Faith.

The most valuable Objection which comes to my thoughts, at present, is this, That *Jesuites* equivocate in their Oaths on design; but the other, if they appear such, it is on necessity: let charity believe this and suppose them sincere; yet let it be consider'd that the *Jesuit* will plead this, that he uses this art in swearing, only to evade the force of some Obligations which the Magistrate would bind him to, and this he will tell us he doth that he may guard and not violate his conscience, and what can the

the *Libertine* say more, (I speak not this to patronize either, rather conclude them both worthy of censure) who refuseth some *Creeds*, or at least part of them, because they descend to particulars to prevent all Equivocation. To say all , the only difference of the persons practice is this, the one useth his art to impose upon Man, the other on God himself; I cease to start more Objections, but rather pass to that which is granted by all who are not *Enthusiasts*, viz. that in all Disputes there must be a *third* to appeal to. When the Heathen is disputed with, *reason* must be pitcht upon as the Umpire, and the *Jew* appeals to the *Prophets*,
and

and the *Christian* to the Scriptures, interpreted by the Catholick Church, without which *Tertulian's* question may be askt. *Qui estis vos? Unde & quando venistis? ubi tamdiu latuistis? &c. Tertull. de Praescrip. Con. Her.*

Besides, to make each man's reason judg of Controversie, is to make it both judg and party too, which may be retorted on the Church, which is a party too in deciding the Controversie. Let this be granted, yet the reason is not the same of private persons as a party, and the whole Church, and let the Libertine pitch upon any third Interpreter, wherein the Objection will not return and make it the party.
This

This so generally obtains in most cases, that a man's own mind is not past possibility of having parties, for an *interested reason* may assert that which true reason will deny; and a man may by habit so frame his mind to tell lies, and believe them himself. But let it be granted that the Church is a party, yet not such as to be suspected. It is a prodigious kind of distrust to think the whole *Catholick Church* should pass a *partial sentence*. That Fathers will not design to deceive their Sons in matters of Divinity, is so true, that some have made use of it to prove the existence of God, and shall the ghostly Fathers be esteem'd such Mon-
sters,

sters, to deceive their Sons in matters of such moment. To say all, that which a *Roman* Doctor asserted of their Church so peremptorily, may be said of the whole, that it ought to give testimony of it self.

Before I conclude this Consideration, I cannot but take notice that some who have extenuated *Heresie* in its name, would also make it impossible that a *Heretick* should be discover'd, because to an obstinate opposing the true Doctrine (in which the nature of *Heresie* consists) it is requir'd that the intimate motions of mens minds be seen. This is illustrated by an instance from Murder, to which I shall only
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oppose this, that he may as well conclude it is impossible to discover Murther. Besides, that similitude fails in the main part of it, for a *Heretick* hath opportunity of recanting, and must be an obstinate Opposer of the Truth *three time* before he is declar'd so. Now the Murtherer is not capable of such respite or pausing, and opportunity of stifling his fault, or making it rather to be none, except he was capable of committing the act three times (as well as the *Heretick* opposing truth) which cannot be except a man had *three lives*.

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Consideration V.

Of Creeds and Impositions, with some Reflexions on the Apostles and other Creeds, and of the extent of Creeds, how necessary for deciding Controversies.

Although there is no absolute necessity imply'd in the nature of Religion, that there must be Creeds or a symbol of Faith, yet it may be safely concluded they are not superfluous. It is convenient that we have an *Enchiridion*, and necessary for the *well being* of the Church, though the substance of
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the Doctrine may be but as an Index to direct to its fuller Explanation in particulars; and a good mean to preserve the true Faith. Though Christ did not immediately draw up his Doctrine in such Articles, it is past doubt he directed the Church to do it, and that perhaps that he might create reverence to the Pastors of the Church, that they should not be only as *Library-keepers*, but *Authors* too in that sense, that a Publisher of an Epitome may be call'd so, whilst they compose the contents of Scripture in a short abridgment by Divine Direction. It is observ'd that Christ did some things to create a Reverence to his E-

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vangelists and Apostles, by committing the charge of the publishing of the Gospel in writing, when he himself could as easily have done it, as *wrote on the ground with his finger*, and shall not his Apostles Successors be esteemed worthy to interpret these holy Writings. To deny them this Authority, and only allow them such a mere *Ministerial office*, and that to be only understood as if they were only *Mercuries*, with a hand stretcht out with a *Scrol for the People to read*, it seems rash : And to confine them only to be judg of Circumstantials, is to minorize their Authority, and makes them but Registers to keep the
 Divine

Divine Books. 'Tis true, this is honour enough to be but *Door-keepers*; and Saint Paul said the *Jews* might glory because *the Oracles of God were committed unto them*, which may not be restrained to the bare letter of the Law, according to each mans apprehension; but in doubtful cases Appeals were to be made to the *Sanedrim*, which hath no small affinity with the proceedings of Councils, though some disputes set them at further distance; besides, I do not remember that Christ taxes in general the *Jewish* Doctors for Exposition of the Law, but when they either clearly perverted the sense and meaning of the Law, or plain-

ly altered it by sinister Interpretations, *making the word of God of none effect*. For if all Illustrations of the Law by *Jewish* Doctors must be laid aside (though we know and avoid the fabulous Interpretation of the *Thalmudist*, many parts of the *Old Testament* would not be so plainly understood, even those which relate to the coming of Christ, and the manner of his Kingdom. If it is said that the *Jewish* Doctors often err'd, so their Authority suspicious, if not invalid, the same will be granted (I presume) of Councils and Church, when their Assertions (if it may be supposed) are manifest contradictions to plain Scripture. This

Bellarmino

Bellarmino confesseth, when he says Councils may not be opposed, *Nisi manifestissime constet intollerabilem errorem, Committi lib. 2. de Concil.* But more of this in its proper place. In this only I shall take notice that the authority of the Church hath been rendered odious to weak minds, whilst some part of it (I do not mean the *Catholick*) run into extreams in *Creeds*, as some men in *habits* or *cloaths*; sometimes the humour of the Age is such that men affect to appear in the large size of *Primitive Ages*, others desirous to appear as small as Nature will admit, one time as *Gyants*, another time as *Pygmies*. This vanity hath crept

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into the Church, some will only own the Apostles Creed, others not content with those which the Church hath received, but must make it larger by *Phylacteries* of *Decretals*.

The *Roman Church* will have each Article of the Creed (as *Astronomers* say of the Planets) each must have its *Assecla* or *Page* attend it. They will scarce believe that they can satisfie the first Article of believing, in case it is not represented by Images, neither will they believe the *Communion* of the *Catholick Church*, except *Rome* may pass for it, and the *Resurrection*, and *day of Judgment* not to be explained without *Purgatory*, some run in another ex-
tream,

stream, they will admire nothing so much as the *Eunuchs Creed* to be imposed on as matters of Christian belief. However they magnifie the *Creed of the Apostles* at the same time, decrying others allowed by the Church of *England*, which gives just occasion of suspicion, that those very persons who own the *Apostles Creed* in words, if prest by the general interpretation of the whole Church, would boggle at that as much as at the *Athanasian Creed*, for though they commend it (as it justly deserves it) for its plainness of matter, and the phrase (so esteemed by the Fathers) yet it is certain there are doubts in some Articles which are not

agreed on, so as to be past dispute, for instance, the *Communion of Saints*, the belief on the *Catholick Church*, and the manner of *Christ's descending into Hell*, not yet agreed on by all parts of the *Catholick Church*, besides those who will have nothing in other accompts of Religion, but in Scripture phrase, must be content with other Language in this. That word *Catholick* hath lately been as much controverted, as the threadbare word *ἐκκλησία*, which word was so hard to *Luther*, that he went about to translate it into the *German Language*, and alter the phrase; for which boldness he was justly charged by *Tanner the Jesuite*;
for

for I am of Nazianzens mind,
not to have a word changed,
for as he says, *One drop of Poyson
may corrupt a great mass.*

I would not have this which is
said of the *Creed*, as to be said
in derogation from its reverence
due to it above other *Creeds*,
which are but Comments on it,
yet there are two questions I
hope may be started without vio-
lence done to it. How it ap-
pears to be a sum of Funda-
mentals. This is well Answer-
ed by some late Authors, *That
the Apostles wrote the whole sum of
what is to be believed, for if they had
omitted any part of it, they might
have as well omitted all.*

Then it must be inquired how
far

far this *Creed* as Apostolical depends on the Churches testimony or authority ; on this latter question the present Controversie depends ; therefore it must be considered what it is to be called *Apostolical*. *Apostolical* is that which is agreeable to the Apostles practice and doctrine. So the title *Apostolical* is fastned to some Churches and several persons whose piety had, hath alliance to that of the Apostles, but when it is given to any Doctrine as the rule of Faith, *Ubi-que semper, & ab omnibus*, obtains in this sense the Apostles *Creed* cannot be called *Apostolical* as to all its parts, for all were not received at the same time, as it is
ob-

observed that St. *Austin*, *Origen*, and *Tertullian*, commenting on the Creed, make no mention of the Articles of the descent into *Hell*, though 'tis confest Saint *Austin* owns it as *Catholick* in other places. 'Tis true, *Ruffinus* an ancient Doctor makes mention of that Article, but says the *Roman Church* did not receive it at that time, but since generally received; I speak not this out of any irreverence or light esteem to the *Creed*, as an Author I heard of, who wrote a scurrilous and malicious piece against the Creed meerly in opposition to another opinion.

That which I infer from what is said, is only this; All Doctrines
if

if they are not immediately received by the whole Church, not rashly to be rejected. This also I could infer, that seeing it is not certain the Apostles wrote it themselves, but in several Ages it had its Ratification, at least the compellation of *Apostolical* from the Church, its plain that the authority of the Church, which makes it above other *Creeds*, and to be the *sum total* of all that is to be believed, makes it depend on that authority of the Church, which gave it its compellation, which (I hope) though borrowed from the authority of the *Church*, which since the Apostles time hath been abused, will be no greater a prejudice to
dis-

discerning minds, than the title of the King, though first derived from the Pope can minorize the honour due to him. This which is said, perhaps may be retorted by an instance in Books of canonical Scripture, by saying we may as well conclude that the Gospel owes its name of Gospel to the *Church*, and the Law its name of the Law, as conclude that the *Creed* as to its denomination, or being *Apostolical*, depends only upon the *Church* which calls it so.

This Objection may find an Answer from this consideration, that although the *Church* is Ministerial, in both *holding* out a Light to declare unto us that the
Gospel

Gospel is the *Gospel*, and the *Law* the *Law*, as much as it doth evidence that the *Creed* is the *Creed*; yet there is this difference, the Books of the *Law* and *Gospel* its probable had their compellation or name written by the same Authors that wrote them but the *Creed* owes its title to the testimony of the *Church* so far as it is call'd the *Apostles Creed*. By this limitation I hope I have prevented another cavil which might conclude, I make the Doctrine of the *Creed* to depend on the *Church*, when I only speak of the compellation as being borrowed from the *Church*, which compellation is the only hinge on which the present Controversie turns, for
take

take away the name (*the Apostles Creed*) and it can be no more said to be the sum of all Religion, than other Doctrines, or *Theses* generally received by the *Church*.

If it is further urged that all Titles of the canonical Books bear not (without doubt) the Authors names as several *Psalms* and the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, because it is not certainly known who were their Authors. This may be granted, yet the case is not the same with the *Creed* and some parts of the canonical Scripture; for the latter it may be safely said that the *Church* gave no new Titles to those Books, but delivered them as they found
 . them

them waitten, or were assured of their Titles by infallible Traditions, but the same cannot so certainly be said of the *Apostles Creed*. From all that is said it is easie to observe how some men are ready to own the Authority of the *Church* when serviceable to their designs, and disowns it when it thwarts private Opinions.

It may be granted that the *Apostles Creed* is *Regula fidei Tutissima*, as a *Rule* though but a foot in length, may discover the crookedness of the greatest quantity, and is useful in thousands of cases, so the *Creed* may measure and discover though not so accurately, the many Voluminous

ous errors in Religion, but not in direct terms but by consequence. To illustrate it by Instances, Christ sums up all the Commandments in one word *Love*, which, *modo implicito*, concludes against all Vice, otherwise it could not be an abridgment of the whole Law, this must be granted, but it is rashness to say that this Command alone is able to check all Vices, and conclude against each particular Sin. It is also said of *Manna* (a fit Emblem of the *Creed*, always to be kept in the Ark of the Church) that eminently contains all favours to gratifie the Taste and Smelling, and the *Opall* and *Iris* have a lovely commix-

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ture

ture of all colours. Now as a man who would pass an accurate Judgment of a sweet body would not appeal to *Manna* which hath it mixt with others, but to some particular object of the same kind, and he who would pass judgment on Colours, *Yellow*, or *Blue*, &c. will not compare them with that in the *Rainbow*, but some other Object of the same complexion or tincture; the same may be said of the Articles of Faith, which are severally comprehended in the *Creed*, yet are not to be an exact measure of their numerous Errors implicitly condemned by it. It hath been doubted by some, whether the principles of *Chymists*, *Salt*, *Sulphur*,

phur, &c. are really in the Bodies, or whether they were as matter fitly prepared, and by Extraction made such. I shall not presume to determine any thing in this, but only apply it to the present case, by saying there are the *Semina* or *Principia* in the *Creed* but particular Articles which confute particular Errors, though they have their foundation from it, yet their whole Superstruction cannot be said to be taken from it.

It is impossible it should be done, therefore weakness to attempt it, for it argues as much weakness in those men who undertake to assert the *Creed* the *sum of all* to be believed, and to confute all Errors, as some when

urged by some of the *Roman Church*, to shew how the Sacraments were contained in the *Creed*, have answered out of *Aquinas. 2. 2. q. 1. a. 8. Eos Articulos contineri & includi in Articulo fidei quo Credimus unam sanctam Ecclesiam, Sanctorum Communionem, Remissionem peccatorum*, that they are contained in the Articles, where we profess a Belief in the *Catholick Church, Communion of Saints, remission of Sins*. And being urged particularly to shew how Baptism was included there, run for Sanctuary to the *Atbanasian Creed*.

This seems to be a far fetcht and an unnatural deduction; for though it may be concluded that the Sacraments are necessarily
im-

implied in the Remission of Sins, as he gives his reason, *Ibidem, nam per Sacramenta peccata remittuntur*, it will conclude the necessity, but says nothing of the nature; wherefore that great Doctor, with all the subtilties of his School-companions, could never extract any thing thence of the nature of them; so if Transubstantiation could not find any other confutation than from those Articles, it would be to little purpose to dispute against it.

Thus one of our Church, who being urged by a Papist how he shewed in the Creed that *Doctrine of the Devils forbidding Marriage*, was exprest in the Creed, answers that neither meats,

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nor marryng of any persons could be unlawful, because a Christian believes in God in his Creed to be maker of all things good, so not to be forborn, and all his Institutions holy, therefore not to be abstained from by any persons: This seems to me as vain an Attempt, and as far fetcht a way of Arguing as those men use, who will undertake to shew there is nothing New, but demonstrate all new Philosophy to be taken out of *Aristotle*. I would not have that which is said so understood, as if I did imagine there were to be *Virtuosos* in Religion as well as Philosophy, and that this Age made new discoveries of Doctrines as the Astronomers have of the Stars,

Stars, and that new Creeds in Divinity are as necessary as new Systems of the World. I am not so ignorant to think that Novelty can commend Religion, though it may Philosophy, and that for this reason, the one is God's work and command, fully revealed at once after Christ's coming. But the product of Humane Observation suffers nothing in its Reputation by being new. Neither doth Religion suffer, but is rather honoured whilst new Arguments, for they must needs be so at the first springing up of *Heretie* against new *Heresies*. This therefore which is said will not minorize or lessen the esteem of the *Creed*,

which the Ancients had of it, for I cannot but own the commendation which *Cyril of Hierusalem* gave of it, ἀνακαλαίωσις σύντομος των ἀναγκαίων δογμάτων, *Catech.* 4.

And having before shew'd the concise and compleat Abridgment of it, says, ὅνπερ τρέπον ὁ τῷ σπέναντος σπέρμα ἐν μικρῷ κόκκῳ πολλὰς περιέχει τὰς κλάδους, compares it to Mustard-seed, more fitly and pertinently than the Eunuchs is by *Smyrk*.

Consideration V.

Though the Apostles Creed may maintain Charity and Union between members of the Catholick Church, whether it can preserve charity in a particuler Church, and in what sense short Professions of Faith so much insisted on by late Reformers, and commended to the Parliament as the full matter of Christian Belief, and in what circumstances they must be, and what persons they are to whom they are sufficient.

IT may be said of matters of Faith in Religion, as *Aristotle* distinguishes in Philosophy,

αἰσθητὰ

αἱ ἀρχαὶ συντηράσμενα principles of Do-
 ctrine, and that which comes by
 deduction, the first which are as the
 grand Ligament or Tye, which
 knit the parts together, or as a
 foundation to support a building
 though the root and other parts
 of it are demolished. This is
 enough to denominate the *Church*
 a Church, but if there be disa-
 greement in other Doctrines
 which may indanger Man's Sal-
 vation, though not so imme-
 diately as those in the Creed, it
 takes off from the beauty of it,
 and makes it look as in the former
 instance, like a *Skeleton* knit to-
 gether by the Articles of one
 Creed, as sinews not agreeing in
 any other parts, or like a *frame*
 or

or *case* of a house without a *Roof* or *Ornament*. I speak not this as uncharitable to the Catholick Church, but to shew how the want of Unity in all Doctrines disguise it. By this Assertion the Catholick Church is not condemned for those Divisions, which destroy not the *Internal communion* with it (though *External* may be wanting) but to shew Charity beautifies it. Wherefore those who separate themselves from another Church, must have some other reasons of their separation than are in the *Apostles Creed*, otherwise the Reformation cannot be justifiable, for the *Roman Church* professeth to believe the same Creed as a late
 Author

Author pleads; therefore Separation not altogether founded on that. Wherefore it remains there must be Doctrines which justify Separation from other measures than the Creed, &c. This may unite in the *Catholick Church*, but not a National or particular Church; for the Church cannot be minced into *Individuals* without being destroyed, at least breach of Charity, and that for this Reason. God under the Law and Gospel was never since *Adam's* Innocency worshiped alone. *Elias* was mistaken when he thought he was *left alone*, the only votary of the true God. I am sensible of an Objection which may be this; That *Luther* in

in the beginning of the Reformation was the only *open professor of the Protestant Faith*, which being granted (as it need not) must suppose some critical time of *Luthers* Protestation, in which he had no followers, which with preciseness will conclude that Christ himself Head of the *Church*, was without any votary at his first birth, except his Mother was one; and there must needs be a certain time when the Apostles were without a Church or Converts: But Religion takes notice of no such Niceties; and as the *Common Law* takes that to be done immediately, which is done in the same day appointed in some cases, taking no precise notice

notice of the hours ; I am sure the Divine Law doth not distinguish such *critical moments*. But to wave these niceties , it was always the method of Reformers to make profession of their Faith. Thus did the *Lutherans* in their *Augustane confession* ; for without this, Charity would not have been maintained within themselves : So then what would the Reformation signifie if there may be as many, and as dangerous and different Opinions among themselves, as there was between them and the Church of *Rome* ; their Reformation signifies little more than a Change, not for the better, but worse ; their dissenting from the *Roman Church*

Church might be justifiable, but amongst themselves (especially in matters absolutely necessary to be believed) such separation intollerable, for though the *Catholick Church* like *Josephs* coat, may have, and be of divers colours and parts, but particular, must be like *Christ seamless* coat, or to speak the Apostles Language, *like minded*, and speak the same thing.

Now this Unity of the Church is not better preserved by any means than by Appeals to several interpretations of places of Scripture (which are ambiguous) by the Councils, Fathers, and Pastors in several Ages. Thus the Champions of the Reformation

tion always owned that Authority as the best means to win Reformation, and the best subsidy to support it. The necessity of this seems to be implied in the Apostles Advice to submission to Pastors, and the Pastors being to give an accompt for the Peoples Souls. I know these words may occasion a voluminous Dispute.

But I shall take them in their plaine acceptation, and only desire the Reader to observe that in case this submission to Pastors, is only to circumstances confin'd, as some will have them, and yet Pastors give an accompt, it is like a Man who is invested with the power of a *Tutor*, yet only to
take

take care of his Pupils Cloaths.

This must be restrained to places which have a doubtful sense, and the definitions or interpretations, such as the words will bear, for I am not so bold to conclude with some of the Church of Rome, that it hath a power to command a Doctrine, which hath no probable foundation in Scripture (as Doctor Stapleton concludes that some things are to be believed, and the Church propound them as matters of Faith, *Etiam si nullo Scripturarum evidenti aut probabilis testimonio confirmetur*, though he at the same time concludes the Church in its definitions is, *Suo modo Divina*.

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It fares with the Church in its desiring matters of Faith, as it doth in prospects, for though *Telescopes* and *Perspections* help the Sight, yet there must be a rude discovery of the Object by the naked Eye, thus the *Milky way* is discerned without the help of a Glass to be a *bright tract* of Heaven, by the *Telescope* which discovers that troop of small Stars from which it borrows its Lustre. The case is the same between Scripture and the Church (I mean obscure places of it) the one gives an ambiguous *Twilight prospect*, the other shews it more *distinctly*.

Thus I have endeavoured to commend the Churches Authority

rity as a necessary Supplement to
 the *Apostles Creed*, or in order to
 maintain Charity amongst mem-
 bers of particular Churches (for
 I do not design in this Paper to
 answer all Objections that the
 former discourse may be lyable
 to.

*I now pass to the other branch of
 the Consideration.*

In what sense short professi-
 ons of Faith so much insisted on
 by the Reformers, and commen-
 ded to the Parliament, can be
 said to be the full matter of Chri-
 stian Faith, and in what circum-
 stances they must be in to whom
 they are sufficient. And whe-

H 2 ther

ther such curtilizing Creeds do not again introduce that implicit Faith, which this Church complaineth of whilst under *Papal* impositions.

For further demonstration of the necessity of the extent of the *Apostles Creed*, by Explanation it seems convenient that I suggest that usual distinction of Fundamentals in respect of their matter, and the persons to whom they are offered as objects of Belief. To the first 'tis enough that I say one Assertion may be a Fundamental though not primarily so, which in respect of another, is but as a corollary or branch of it, as it is easie to instance in the *Apostles Creed*. To the second it will

will be sufficient to say that all Doctrines are not pressed on all persons with the same necessity or upon peril of Salvation, which will plainly appear from the consideration of the Requisites necessary to make such necessity. The first of which is this, viz. A conviction of the mind, that what is proposed as matter of Faith, must be commended to Man by God, for there is no *humane dictator* can command any matter of Belief to Man merely as Humane. Thus the Apostles themselves doubted of the Resurrection, or at least were not sufficiently convinced of it till matter of fact convinced them of their *Masters* being God as well as Man.

Another Requisite, is, that there must be a sufficient proposal of matters of Faith, otherwise it is insignificant to a man, for what is Revelation to him to whom it is proposed, for matter of Faith is like Objects which are in their own nature visible, yet the Eye doth not always actually see them, neither can it in some cases till more conveniently situated or impediments removed. Thus *Apollos* ignorance and imperfect Creed, excusable till he was more fully instructed of *Saint Paul* for the Doctrines of which he doubted before, although as the Sun they always shin'd, yet as the one cannot be seen till above the *Horizon*,
though

though it is obvious to other eyes, so the other not assented unto till sufficiently explained. If this seem not opposite, take an Instance more Divine. As none could see the City of *Samaria* (though it was naturally as visible to other persons) but the Prophet, so none discern *Divine Truth* till Grace makes the discovery.

The last is a disposition of mens minds fit to receive such *Divine impressions*; thus Mad men and Fooles are not to be expected *Converts to Religion, who are Aliens and Strangers to their own Reason*; and in this sense that applauded conclusion of the vanity of holding a Candle, and attempt to make one see whom nature designed for darkness,

and to this head the citations out of St. *Chrysostom* (afterward to be consider'd) and others must be reduced leaving such *Idiots*, to the censure of *God himself*.

This being promis'd, I hope I may more fairly conclude against those conclusions which factious heads have drawn from thence, for all that can be inferred from such charitable censures, is only the modest censure of the *Church*, whilst it respects God's Judicature; so that those persons who have so formally made address to Authority for tolleration of short Creeds, must plead their cause in the same circumstances they thus indulg'd were, which is impossible, except they can Antidate

tidate time and be as the Apostles were then, or men now, who are incapable of *Divine Mysteries*, wherefore I may ask those men this Question, whether they speak for themselves, as of the Clergy, or for other persons, if for others (which I presume they will be ready to own as officious Advocates, they bring in the Doctrine of the *Author of Humane Reason*, the Reasoner supposing it to a sufficient assent to Christian Doctrine if Scripture is commented on by a private invention.

This part of the consideration (if I design to be tedious, would lead me to examination of the several cavils against
Coun-

Councils as to the quality of persons, &c. and to answer an Objection of *Nazianzen*, who saith he never saw a happy event of a Council; which words concurring to all I have met with, condemns not Councils, but rather is a complaint of the want of free and general Councils, as is obvious to any who considers that Author's drift and design. But I pass from this and other curious cavils by considering that such niceties in Religion are like questions about the Stars, whose Nature and Influence we are sensible of, and can probably demonstrate their Natures, but not in such a way as can answer questions that a roving brain can start

start, and can shew greater probability that they are such, than the extravagant invention can, they are not, but I shall not continue this Digression rather return to the former case,

This being granted, it must be considered that these persons with their slender stock of Faith, are admitted into the Church as men into an Hospital, and charity rather than Reason, concludes them in a safe state of Salvation. Now is it not unreasonable to propose that as a Model or measure of Faith to all which is only indulged to Mad men and Fools, or at least men of weak capacities, and that on no better ground than that tender
one

one of extensive charity, suitable to which are the accounts of the Church given by the Ancients whilst it is thus described, *ἐκκλησίαν πολλῶν ἀθροίσμα ἢ ἐκλεκτῶν*, a certain number of the Elect in which may be babes in Christ, foolish as well as wise, and compared to the Ark, when there was a universal reception of Creatures, which were clean.

If these Zealous Petitioners speak for themselves, then that small measure of Faith and narrow capacity, will be an argument against them in the opinion of their own party. But if it is alleadged that *Rahab* had but a small measure of Faith, and yet

yet Sainted by St. Paul (at least in the catalogue of eminent Believers) and the Centurion with his slender knowledg of Christ had no less commendation from Christ himself. Let it be considered that this is not applicable to Pastors of the Church. What a medley and ill favoured being of a Church would that be in which a *Rahab* or *Convert-Harlot*, a *Centurion* or *Souldier*, should assume a *Clerical* power. The Records of late times, the odious face of the Church (if it may deserve that compellation of the Church) prevents me in saying more.

This which is premised will make way for this conclusion.
That

That the exacting of necessary Oaths, Subscription, &c. and other means of Conformity are no otherwise an intrenching on Liberty than the exigency of Christian Society requires, and the Savage may as well complain of Policy, which reduced them from their wilde and natural extravagancy, as the Libertine of a Test or tryal of his conscience so far as it concerns the Magistrate.

This perhaps may appear too Magisterially said, if I do not give the Reader the plea for Liberty, and suggest this as a conclusion.

Before these considerations are closed, I cannot but add
this,

this, That some who disdain all Auxiliaries and Aid from the authority of the Fathers and Councils, seem to press them into service of the Church, when they find any clause that may aid them in their wild and arbitrary Model of Ecclesiastical Government.

Thus I find Saint *Chrysostome* among the Ancients, cited as an enemy to the Method which seems to force Religion, and *Grotius* amongst the latter, which practice seems like that of Interested Politicians, who will let Statutes lye as an old Armory (fit for service) but not to be used till occasion furbishes them and gives the rusty Iron an edge.
That

That this may not seem *gratis dictum*. Let the former Author be considered, whose Paternal Indulgence and Instruction to the Priests speaks favourably of weak Christians, his words are these, *Lib. 2. de Sacerdot.* διὰ τὸ το
 πολλές χρεία τῆ μηχανῆς ἵνα πειθῶσιν ἐκόντες ἐν τῷ
 ὑπάρχοντι τῷ ὄντι τῶν ἱερέων θεραπείαις οἱ χάρμον-
 ται.

And *Grotius* his favourable words extend only to the not propagating of Christian Religion by force, not contradicting the use of the Civil Power in settlement or well composing a Church already planted.

This I presume will be granted, that the Church of *England* hath endeavoured to reduce refractory

fractory men, by all imaginable means, and when that takes not effect the Civil power begg'd to assist them, which contradicts the sense of the Holy Father, who only designs to shew that Clerical power proceeds not in the method of a Temporal Prince; and another citation of *Salvian*, is to this purpose, whilst he says they are to be tenderly handled, *Qui bono animo Errant*; or as a late Author says, *Ill Believers*. For speaking of the *Arrians*, he makes this Plea for them, *Non Odio sed affectu dei honorare & se Dominum & amare credentes*.

I

This

This plea cannot be made in this Age, for it may well be supposed that the *Arrians* (of whom he speaks) had not the same opportunity of being confirmed in Religion, the Question debated being only confirmed by one Council, but that in dispute now by many. So that Refractory Patrons of factious Zealots may be askt *Tertullian's* Question, *Interea perperam Evangelizabatur tot millia millium perperam tineta, tot opera fidei perperam administrata, tot virtutes, tot Charismata perperam operata, tot Sacerdotia perperam functa, tot denique Martyria perperam Coronata.*

To

To say all, time which blots out other characters , makes Religion more legible , and Martyrs blood as a Rubrick to each clause of the *Divine Law* so plain , that Man may run the course of his Temporal life , and read his title to Heaven.

But if this unhappy Age gives instances of those which cannot , and desire to be tolerated in their ignorance , their only plea must be their weakness , which in matters of Religion can have no other way of process than *Sub forma pauperis* (if I may borrow the Lawyers term) as

I 2 men

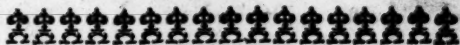
men of weak apprehension ; and the defect of their *narrow Faith* must be supplied or relieved from Heaven, not Earth, from God (who alone knows how to rate the *poverty* of *Spirit* according to its *true value*) not Man. And such a Toleration (if its term may be allowed as it concerns God himself) must have its compleat Ratification , not only from the *Princes* and *Churches Clemency*, but God's highest and last Judicature.

To conclude all , it seems a more pertinent way for such to address themselves to the *Divine* rather than *humane Judicature* , and endeavour that God may

may *incline* his ear to their *prayers*,
and *increase* their *Faith* rather than
attempt to *supple* and *bend* the
Magistrate to compliance by
fervent petitions.

F I N I S.





Errata.

Read St. *Malo* Page 5. r. launching out into p. 8.
r. Arguments are like p. 10. r. all error p. 19.
r. the design of Christ in this place p. 21. animate or
inanimate p. 23. r. before I pass p. 24. r. except some
of which that were miraculous p. 32. because latter
Kings p. 33. minds me p. 41. footing in the World
p. 45. r. three times p. 63. Articles of the Creed such
p. 70. r. threadbare word p. 72. r. defining p. 98. Per-
spectives *ibid.* and disown p. 80. r. exprest and con-
demn'd p. 85. for God under Law and Gospel never
since, r. God never since *Adams* Innocency was only
worshipped but by one Votary, p. 92. r. *probabili* p. 97:
r. complain'd p. 100. p. 112. r. *ἰαυτὸς τοῖς ἀμφοτέροις.*

